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ABSTRACT

This publication provides a general background for appreciation of Asian music and explains some of the specific techniques of the Asian tonal art to those who have some formal knowledge of Western music. In addition to a brief introductory section which identifies basic differences of non-Western music, sections are included on the history, philosophy, and elements of the Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Javanese, and Balinese systems of music. A short bibliography of readings is provided on non-Western music. (SJM)

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AN INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN MUSIC

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THE ASIA SOCIETY

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PREFACE

The potential human enrichment represented by Asian music is so rewarding that the Asia Society is delighted to offer this introduction in an effort to promote increased knowledge and understanding of Asian peoples and cultures. This publication attempts to provide a general background for appreciating Asian music and, for those who have some formal knowledge of Western music, to explain some of the specific techniques of the Asian tonal art.

Mr. Purcell's suggestions for further reading and especially for listening enhance the value of AN INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN MUSIC. For a more comprehensive annotated listing of records, the reader may consult the Society's guide to records on Asia. Single copies are available at no charge.

Our appreciation is extended to The Asia Foundation for its grant which helped finance this publication. Above all, we are indebted to William L. Purcell for his cooperation and scholarship in making possible AN INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN MUSIC.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN MUSIC

Listeners accustomed to the symphonic music of concert halls of the West and to the vocal music of opera will find it necessary to reorient habits to understand the music of the East. In almost every respect Asian music differs from that of the West—in harmony, rhythm, melody, modes, intervals of the octave, notation, forms, voice production, instruments. Yet it is governed by its own logic founded upon traditions no less valid than those of Western music and it can be learned through study just as we master the grammar and vocabulary of an unfamiliar tongue; for music is *not* a universal language.

In Western music the pitch gamut, or octave—C to C on the piano—is divided into twelve notes, the seven white and five black keys, each of which is a half-tone apart. Although equal intervals, or temperament, were known to the Chinese theoretician Chu Tsai-yu in 1596, a century before Andreas Werkmeister invented equal temperament in the West, Eastern peoples care nothing for this device and may divide the octave into twenty-two, twelve, seven, five or four tones that sound out of tune until Westerners become accustomed to them. Whereas Western music (I refer to the orthodox music up to World War I before the 20th century revolution) utilizes two melodic patterns, or modes—the major and minor—Eastern music has many modes.

Probably the most obvious difference between the two musics is that harmony, or the simultaneous combination of sounds of different pitch which is of primary importance in Western music of the past millennium, is not used to any appreciable extent in Eastern tonal art. Frequently Oriental melody is complex and refined, free of the shackles of harmony. Eastern folk music is accessible to the Western listener but Eastern melody on the art music level is elusive and difficult to comprehend. The Orient has specialized in melody just as the Occident has developed harmony and Africa has evolved musical rhythm. Rhythm, which in the West is a succession of relatively heavy and light accents is, in Eastern music, the addition of short and long notes frequently duple or quadruple in time; it is not the rhythm of motion but of symmetry and rest. Occidental music is played from the written notes, or score, and created by specific composers. Oriental music is improvised within a conventional and rigid framework, or passed on from master to pupil. Composers are thus not very important and notation is used only as an adjunct to memory. Forms of instrumental and vocal music are, of course, entirely different between East and West although the functions served—to accompany the drama, for religious service, for ceremonies of state, for aesthetic recreation—are the same.

Eastern singing cultivates a nasal voice and other vocal qualities unpleasant to Westerners, not because the Indians, Chinese and Japanese cannot sing in the style of the West but because they prefer the nasal quality of tone that can be as aesthetically satisfying as the *bel canto* style.

Difference in the music of East and West does not imply superiority or inferiority but solely another equally valid approach that depends upon variation of the culture complex. Eastern music is integrated with an outlook on life that recognizes permanence as more important than change, being of greater value than becoming, and the pursuit of self more rewarding than the acquisition of things. Unless we can summon at least imaginative identification with such un-Western and especially un-American philosophy, Eastern music and culture in general will forever remain a closed book.

The primary systems of music in Asia derive from the oldest civilizations, India and China, and from these two centers influence proceeded to other regions. India can be credited with the oldest continuous musical tradition in the world, going back some 3,000 years. Chinese music enters history in the Shang Dynasty (1766–1122 B.C.). Korean music, according to legend, was modified by Chinese music and instruments as early as 1122 B.C. Japanese music stemmed from Korean music in the 5th century A.D. The music of Southeast Asia was influenced by both China and India in the early centuries

of the Christian era. Such is the basic picture of complicated cultural interrelationships in the development of Asian music. Let us now consider the leading systems individually.

INDIA

One characteristic of Eastern music not mentioned above is its relative resistance to change. European music undergoes innovations in style almost from decade to decade and falls into periods of historical growth, but Asian music is traditional and shows little change in the course of centuries.

Indian music, as far as is known, is today much what it was a millennia ago. To a limited extent only is it an independent aesthetic art; almost all serious music is integrally related to religion as was European music during the Middle Ages. The mode of producing music is similar; we find small instrumental groups or even large instrumental groups but without a sense of orchestration. Music is chiefly vocal with instruments to support the voice in the drone which consists of the unison, or octave, the fourth and fifth. As with early medieval Europe, there is no harmony beyond these rudimentary hints. The religious connection is to be seen in the association between notes and themes (*ragas*) with planets, signs of the zodiac, magical properties, hours of the day and night, etc.

As is usual with ancient peoples, the origin of music is ascribed to a god. The Hindu *sangita* (music, dancing and drama) was created by Shiva whose rhythmic dance symbolized the motion of the universe. Shiva the Destroyer, the third member of the Hindu trinity of godhead—with Brahma the Creator and Vishnu the Preserver—stood close to creation in the circle of birth and death, dissolution and destruction being recognized as inseparable from life in the cosmic flow of existence. Music was performed by the gods and was a sacred art, as were painting, sculpture and drama. Religion, life and art were all united in the rituals, songs and domestic details of every Hindu home.

In India there is a close association between music and nature. The life of the people is less complex and more leisurely than in the West. Any time of the day or night is suitable for music-making. Instruments are simpler in construction. The national instrument, the *vina*, corresponds in prevalence and popularity to the piano in the United States but is not as complicated. A piece of bamboo is sufficient to construct a flute. A drum can be made from skin stretched over a water pot. Many of the complex instruments of Western type would be impractical in India because of the intense humidity in most parts of the country.

The standard Hindu scale, which was mentioned in theoretical writings as early as 400 B.C., like our diatonic scale, consists of seven notes but with different intervals. In mythology the pitch of these notes is said to have been derived from the cry of the peacock, the call of the mother cow, the bleat of a goat, the cry of a heron, the sound of a cuckoo, the neighing of a horse and the trumpeting of an elephant. The octave is further subdivided into a total of twenty-two intervals. The highly evolved melodic music of India required intervals shorter than the semitone of Western music to give the variety and subtlety that are obtained from Western major and minor modes through harmony. In this way the microtonal (less than half-tone, or semitone) intervals of a melodic system are the expressional equivalent of Western harmony.

Western ears are usually frustrated at initial exposure to a system of music that has evolved melodically with a different set of expressional conventions. The emotional and intellectual values that are derived in the West from simultaneous tones are found in Hindu music from the succession of notes. Whereas in the Occident the note is important and is usually controlled by the player in both duration and loudness, with the Indian musician the interval counts, as the after-tone of a plucked string with its microtonal grace or shades of pitch that fade into silence. Grace, *gamaka*, is not ornamentation as it is in Western music. It is, rather, a necessary and inevitable corollary of any highly developed non-harmonic music just as are intervals of less than a semitone. Grace gives the third dimension, or perspective, to melody just as harmony does. There are a dozen or more different ways of shading melodies. The finger is slid along the string in

either or both directions alternately. The vibrating string may be deflected to sharpen the note or flattened by pressing the nail on the string and vigorously plucking. Echoes, wails and tremolos are some of the ornamental effects while the voice lends itself to *portamentos* (glide through the tones), trills and other resources of the coloratura style.

Ragas are the established melody-forms of India for which there is no analogy in Western music. Popley, an English writer, defines *ragas* as "different series of notes within the octave, which form the basis of all Indian melodies, and are differentiated from each other by the prominence of certain fixed notes and by the sequence of particular notes." Each *raga* has its principal note, or *amsa*, which is emphasized in performance by stress and frequent use. There is also a secondary note which is a fourth or fifth removed from the *amsa*. The tones of the *raga* often differ in ascent and descent. A *raga* may have from five to seven notes selected from the twenty-two of the tonal gamut. *Ragas* are merely the bases of melodies, the essential scale, from which the musician elaborates in a performance which may last for two or more hours. Thus an indefinite number of melodies can proceed from the same *raga* which remains faithful to one mood throughout the course of its unfolding. Therefore Indian music does not use the dramatic juxtaposition of mood that is characteristic of Western music. To the Indian listener mood is further enhanced by extra musical values, such as association with hours of the day and night, seasons of the year and colors. An art of painting, *ragmala*, attempts to give a pictorial equivalent of the mood and significance of different *ragas* in their emotional effect on gods and men.

Nowhere do we get a clearer distinction between Hindu and European feeling than in musical rhythm. Western rhythm, perhaps a reflection of the dynamic, power psychology of Western man, proceeds from the dance and march and contrasts the stressed and unstressed note. Hindu rhythm takes its departure from song, the meters of poetry and employs short and long notes. The numbers 2 and 3 are fundamental in both systems, but the Western practice is to multiply in more complex rhythms and the Asian conception is to add. In the West 6/8 is equivalent to 3×2 but to the Hindu it is 3 plus 1 plus 2. The latter is an example of the rhythmic pattern, or mode of time, that is known in India as *tala*. The *tala* is composed of one or more numbers each of which may consist of from one to nine beats. Ancient theoretical works describe some 120 *talas* but only about thirty are used today. The *tala* is indicated by the composer together with the *raga*.

The rhythmic subtlety and variety of Hindu music are expressed by the many kinds of drums that have been associated with it from remote antiquity. In accordance with the nature of Hindu rhythm, drums are used to bring out the meter of a song or to give it zest by cross meters. In the latter, a singer may give five bars of nine units while the drummer plays nine bars of five units. Or the drummer may beat cross rhythms with his two hands, one rhythm with one hand and a different rhythm with the other. Drums are not used for accent or for dramatic crescendo. The stick is very seldom used, the drum being struck with the fingers and palm of the hand. The leading type is the *mridanga*, or pot drum, made originally of clay with skin stretched over the mouth. Today this drum is barrel-shaped and made of wood. It is played at both ends which are differently tuned. The *tabla*, the second leading type, exists in pairs (originally the *mridanga* was divided into two) and only one head is used, the two drums being of different size and sometimes of different materials, copper and wood.

The most famous Indian instrument is the *vina*, a stick-zither that goes back at least to the 7th century A.D. The modern *vina* with a calabash at one or both ends has seven strings and is played with the fingernails or with a plectrum. Among the most important stringed instruments is the *sitar*, a member of the lute family, said to have been invented by Amir Khusru, poet and musician at the court of Sultan Ala-Uddin-Khiliji (1295–1315). Another famous kind of lute is the *sarod* identified today with the greatest master of modern times, Ali Akbar Khan, as is the *sitar* identified with Ravi Shankar. The *sarangi* is the Indian violin, played with a bow, and is made by hollowing out a block of

a specific kind of wood. Akin to the *sitar* and *sarangi* is the *esraj*, a variety of lute, also played with the bow. One of the most popular of Indian instruments is the *tambura*, the four strings of which are used to supply a drone for the singer and instrumentalist. Among the finest wood instruments are the *sahnai*, or oboe, and the *nagaswaram*, a larger type of *sahnai*. Very ancient is the flute traditionally associated with Krishna. There is also the conch-shell, the buffalo horn, a variety of the bagpipe, and panpipes with reeds made of bamboo. The chief brass instrument is the trumpet which takes a number of forms, straight and curved. Among percussion instruments other than the drum and bells are cymbals, castanets and, rarely, gongs.

None of the very ancient Indian music has been preserved in notation although there are specimens that date back a few centuries. The tradition has been to transmit music from teacher to pupils by memory. The instrumentalist and the singer do not read music. The essentials, as *raga* and *tala*, are memorized and the rest is a matter of improvisation. At least this was true until the present century when, through contact with the West, music became more formalized and academies and schools were founded, courses of instruction instituted, textbooks written and more faithful systems of notation devised.

Hindu music is divided into four main types—classical, folk, religious and popular. Indian classical music does not hold any more attraction for the man in the street than it does in corresponding development in the Occident. The people have their melodious songs that are free in form—religious songs, hymns, love songs and patriotic tunes. As in the West, the movies are an important medium for the dissemination of popular ditties. Classical music, the formal music of the *ragas*, is mostly chamber music; large choral and orchestral ensembles are the exception.

Of the many forms of Indian music there are religious types such as the *Dhrupad*, a solemn song; the *Bhajana*, with choir and orchestra; the *Khayal*, *Thumri*, *Tappa*, *Ghazal* and *Dadra*, love compositions; the *Marsiya*, *Povada* and *Karkhas*, war songs. The Hindu drama is associated with music and has been operatic, dating from the "golden age" of Kalidasa (c. 400 A.D.) to Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) and to the present.

CHINA

The origin of the Chinese people and the age of their civilization are unknown. Nevertheless, the civilizations of China and India are the oldest in the world with a probable cultural continuity in China of over 7,000 years. It is presumable that Chinese music experienced slight change from antiquity to the Revolution of 1911. Since then Chinese music and Chinese society have been in an accelerated transition as the result of closer contact with the West. The elegant court music of China is now a lost tradition; Confucian and Taoist ritual music are almost extinct. Music for the orchestra and solo instruments, at one time threatened in survival, has undergone a comeback due to the awakened consciousness that it is a national treasure.

Before discussing the elements of the Chinese system of music, a few words should be said about the position of music in Chinese thought. To the Chinese, as to the Hindus, Greeks and peoples of many another ancient culture, music was both more and less than it is in the modern West. It was *more* because it was connected with a view of the universe in which music played a causal part in man's relation to the world. In China, pitch and scales were carefully regulated lest an error in their organization bring about the downfall of the State. Such an outlook is incomprehensible to Westerners unless it is remembered that in a civilization in which scientific advancement is in a primitive state, man's need for action and understanding of nature being constant, this action and understanding must be expressed in terms of magic, superstition and appeal to the gods rather than in the empirical formulas of cause and effect. Music, an art both mysterious and emotionally compelling, was requisitioned to form a prominent part in a peoples' drive toward understanding and control of the external world. Music was *less* in early civilization than it is in

the West because it did not function as an aesthetic art alone but as a utilitarian discipline. The prominence given to music by the ancients was probably as much due to misconception of its true nature as it was to superior discernment of the greatness of the art of tones.

The Chinese placed music between the cosmos and the State. Music took its law from the cosmos and passed it on to the State. The cosmos consisted of infinite time, infinite space, matter, energy and sound. Musical instruments and tones symbolized these five elements of the cosmos and music was largely responsible for transmitting cosmic order to the State through the people. Each of the five notes of the scale in use carried a weight of symbolism that connected it with a planet, a color, matter and so forth. Instruments were classified by the predominant material of their structure, whether metal, wood or stone. If pitches, scales or the symbolism of instruments were not correct, the State would be thrown out of tune with cosmic unity. And this was what was supposed to have happened at the downfall of a dynasty. In consequence, a new emperor ordered the reform of music. In much the same spirit, Plato regulated music as an educational force in his republic. Confucius (551-478 B.C.) and Mencius (372-289 B.C.) both expressed this prevalent Chinese attitude toward a connection between good music and a prosperous State. According to Confucius, the ideal State is one in which the peoples are educated by, above all *li* and *yueh*, rituals and music.

The earliest Chinese scale was pentatonic, or five-toned, and in spite of numerous departures, the pentatonic has persisted as the fundamental basis of tonal structure in China. This scale corresponds to the black keys of the piano, or to the white keys C,D,E,G,A, in a scale composed of whole tones and thirds. Also, from the earliest times (according to legend, around 25,000 B.C. during the reign of Huang Ti, the "Yellow Emperor,") theory divided the octave into twelve *lüs*, or tonal steps, an untempered chromatic scale, the intervals of which were not used in creative music but served as a means for the transposition of the pentatonic scale. In the pentatonic scale five different modes would be possible by arranging the intervals in different sequences. Thus, starting with D and proceeding for an octave, we have a whole tone, a third, a whole tone, a third and a whole tone. The purpose and function of the *lüs* apparently were to enable these five modes to be transposed to any of the twelve chromatic keys of the octave. Microtonal intervals, so prominent in Indian music, were employed only at the Sung Dynasty (960-1280 A.D.) in an experiment that left no permanent trace on Chinese music. And similar to Indian music, harmony was never used in Chinese practice as a deliberate expressional device. Nor did the Chinese develop rhythm. Simple duple rhythms have provided sufficient variety to satisfy the Chinese ear. The many percussion instruments were used for tone-color rather than for rhythmic complexity.

The Chinese developed a dual notation for music, one set of characters to indicate pitch and rhythm that were written at the right of the verbal text, and another set, the neumes, were given at the left to make apparent the structural elements of motion. Shen Yüeh (441–513), observing the rising, falling and level intonations of the voice, invented a system of neumes to indicate the course of accompanying music and to provide a graphic analysis of musical form. Thus there is a neume *p'ing* for level movement, *shang* for rising and *ch'ü* for falling. These neumes performed exactly the same function—to indicate the general movement of the voice—as did Latin neumes of *plain chant* which were independently developing in the West at about the same time. Unlike Latin neumes, however, those of China were utilized to develop a science of melodic form in which a design of neumes could be drawn up, words fitted in and finally the exact notes and rhythms composed.

From the earliest times Chinese music existed in the usual instrumental, poetic and choral forms. Music was sung with poetry and accompanied by an instrument or instruments, and it also flourished in an instrumental form with players assembled

into orchestras which included singers and dancers. Poetry and music were united and the existence of a poem implied the existence of a musical setting. There was music without poetry, nevertheless, since it is hardly conceivable that orchestral music was attached in each and every instance to a poetic text. Whether or not specifically orchestral music was composed is not known; it may have been that famous music associated with poetry was adapted for instrumental use.

During the Chou Dynasty (1122–255 B.C.) orchestras did not exceed twenty-seven players but were somewhat larger during the Han period (206 B.C.–221 A.D.) and, with the T'ang Dynasty (618–907 A.D.), there were mammoth orchestras such as the Royal Orchestra at Lo Yang that numbered 180 lutes, 120 harps, forty flutes, 200 mouth organs, twenty oboes, two sets of *ch'ings* and two sets of bells—a total of 564 instruments. Chinese musicians were directed by a conductor who stood before his orchestra on a podium, a pattern followed by Western orchestras more than a millennium later. Not only did men perform in the many orchestras of various dimensions that existed at that time, there were also women musicians and even female orchestras. Comparable to modern Occidental practice, performers and singers were imported from foreign lands—from Turkey, Cambodia, Japan and Samarkand. And as in Europe until the 18th century, orchestras were confined to the homes and palaces of the rich and could be enjoyed by the poor only at churches and temples. Who composed the music is unknown except for a very few names. China appears to have observed the usual custom in thinking it hardly worthwhile to keep records of mere music-makers—the Bachs, Beethovens and Brahmses—when there were great men, princes, politicians and priests to chronicle on rolls of bamboo, parchment and paper.

It was during the T'ang Dynasty that Chinese music-drama, or opera, came into prominence. Emperor Ming Huang (713-756) founded a dramatic school, called the "Pear Garden," to train young male and female singer-actors. This Chinese dramatic form was a unique combination of a play, an opera and vaudeville. As an art form it ranked—and still ranks as it flourishes today—no higher than the average *bel canto* Italian opera or a movie. The Chinese themselves did not regard plays as literature and the music associated with drama and sung by the actors was second-rate or worse.

One classification of plays was by style of music employed; the four varieties were known as *kuan-ch'ü, er-huang, hsi-p'i* and *pan-tzu*. Of these *kuan-ch'ü* was a bit higher in quality than the others and featured the flute as its major instrument: this type was derived from classical plays of the Yuan Dynasty.

Chinese operas, with subjects most often drawn from history, were composed of the spoken word and arias, or song. Similar to Greek drama, at times of emotional concentration the voice would rise to song from speaking. Recitatives were accompanied by percussion instruments while the arias were sung with the full orchestra of eight to ten instruments playing in unison. The deep natural voice was seldom used; head tones, or falsetto, were cultivated by Chinese singers. Fighting scenes and dances took the place of the Western opera ballet. Women were never allowed on the stage with men and feminine roles were played by men and boys. In a few female companies masculine roles were assumed by women. Although a performance lasted from five to six hours (at least in modern times), individual dramas were much shorter and many different ones were performed in an evening or at a matinee.

During the Chou Dynasty (1122-255 B.C.) a number of important instruments were introduced into China. The four types of flutes constructed chiefly of bamboo, were *hsiao, kuan, ch'ih* and *yueh*. Zithers existed in two types, the famous *ching* and the *she*. The *ching* is a symbol of learning and signifies that its possessor is learned and not necessarily musical. It is a fretted long zither with seven strings of silk, two of which merely repeat the primary five tones. The *she* has twenty-five strings in pentatonic tuning on an unfretted board. The mouth organ consists of a series of upright pipes of various sizes. Bells go back to remote antiquity. The Chinese were

very skillful in making bells and may have originated this art. Bronze cymbals and gongs were introduced into China in the T'ang Dynasty and probably came from Turkey. From Mongolia and Tibet came brass trumpets and a variety of tubular metal trumpets so long they had to be rested on the ground to play. The cylindrical oboe was imported from the West and the conical oboe from India. Other instruments used by the Chinese include the bowed zither and fiddle, the dulcimer, the harp and drums.

JAPAN

In the early years of the 6th century Buddhism was introduced into Japan from Korea together with the ceremonial music of China. In the next century, Japan was in direct contact with the China of the brilliant T'ang Dynasty. Japanese students in China brought home elements of Chinese culture including musical practice, instruments and melodies. Most important for Japan, however, was the importation from China of the dance music of India which in Japan became known as *gagaku* and remains one of the high points of the world's music, a profound and beautiful art of tone.

Gagaku is played by a small orchestra and is accompanied by dancers. The orchestra consists of the *hichiriki* (flute), *sho* (mouth organ), *oteki* (transverse flute), *koto* or *wagon* (fretted long zither), *biwa* (lute), a gong and several kinds of drums. The dancers number from one to six and wear magnificent costumes and grotesque masks. *Gagaku* became the most distinctive classical music of Japan and was confined to the Imperial Court where it has survived to this day.

The Japanese scale, like that of China from which it was derived, is basically pentatonic. It is usually a five-note scale but occasionally has two added notes. There are two modes known as *ritsu* and *ryo* that are different in basic structure. The *ritsu* mode is composed of two fourths and exists in two forms—D,E,G,A,B,D and D,F, G,A,C,D. The *ryo* mode begins with two consecutive seconds (C,D and D,E) and its notes are C,D,E,G,A,C. There are at least seven points for the modulation of these modes.

Japanese music is fundamentally melodic. Combinations of instruments and voices are in unison. Microtonal intervals are known to exist as in *koto* embellishments and in the singing of Noh plays. Similar to Chinese music, Japanese rhythm is not developed to any high degree and the time is usually common. Notation exists in a rather undeveloped form and tablature systems are used, especially for the *koto*.

In the 14th century A.D. Japanese drama in the form of the Noh play with music came into being as an offshoot of *gagaku*. "Noh" means "accomplishment" in Japanese and this word accurately characterizes the grace and finish of this dramatic form that was perfected by Buddhist monks as a medium of entertainment and instruction for the feudal nobility. The Noh drama is performed on a wooden stage which has extensions for singers of the chorus and for musicians. The latter are four in number and consist of a cross-flute player and three drummers. A small chorus of singers is used in various ways throughout the drama, singing in solos, in chorus, or accompanying the actors. Singing is done in the nasal style, often falsetto. Elegant costumes, glories of textile art, are worn by the actors who use masks carved of wood that are also works of art. In recent centuries types of art-song have developed of which the most notable are the *Naga-uta*, or "long song," derived from Noh and employing actors and pantomime, and the *Ha-uta*, or "short song," in which the singer is accompanied by two *shamisens* and a *shakuhachi*.

Kabuki is the popular Japanese dramatic form that combines a play with dance and music and is called *nagauta*. *Kabuki* was derived from the aristocratic Noh plays and the puppet or doll theater and had its beginning in 1596. However most of the present-day examples of *kabuki* and *nagauta* music originated in the 19th century. Musical forces consist of the human voice, *shamisen*, flute and drums.

One of the most popular and elegant of Japanese instruments—the national instru-

ment of Japan—is the *koto*, a zither made of paulownia wood with thirteen silken strings over moveable bridges of wood, ivory and plastic. It is at least six feet in length and is played with ivory picks fixed to the three fingers of the right hand. The *koto* is identified with home music, as is the piano in the United States, and first became prominent in the 17th century when a blind musician, Yatsuhashi Kengyo, of Kyoto, founded the school devoted to this instrument. The *shamisen* is a banjo-like instrument with three strings played with a plectrum. It is a favorite of popular entertainers and amateurs as well.

Most Japanese instruments were derived from China and modified to some extent to suit Japanese taste. Thus the *koto* corresponds to the Chinese *ching*, the *hichiriki* (flute) to the Chinese *kuan*, the *biwa* (short lute) to the Chinese *p'i p'a* and the *sho* (mouth organ) to the Chinese *sheng*.

JAVA AND BALI

In Java and Bali the chief mode of musical expression is not chamber music, prevalent in India, nor choral music, found among the Polynesian peoples, but orchestral music on a scale comparable to that of T'ang Dynasty China. Almost every male in Bali participates in the orchestras today, there being thousands of orchestras that have twenty-five or thirty players each. The name of the orchestra is *gamelan* and the typical group is composed chiefly of metal percussion instruments. Each village in Bali has from one to three orchestras supported by members of the community who, in spare time from their regular occupations, play in the orchestras. There are a few professional musicians but many of the part-time players are highly skilled and able to play more than one instrument in creditable fashion. Performances are not the haphazard and impromptu affair that might be supposed from the abundance of musicians. Rehearsals of new pieces of music may last over a period of months before the orchestra plays for public performance.

The orchestras of Bali and Java are not uniform in the constitution of instruments included and the type of music played but are of various types depending upon the purpose. Each orchestra is a specialized unit and is adapted for a specific function. One may be a concert orchestra, another exists to accompany the drama, another is a funeral or cremation orchestra, still another type may accompany processions or it may supply music for a type of dance. Today no less than fifteen kinds of orchestras have survived.

Instruments of the orchestra may be classified by their function: those that are free melodically and rhythmically such as the violin (*rabab*) derived from Islam, the flute (*suling*) and the human voice; those that play the leading melody, the metallophones and gongs (*bonang*); the accompanying instruments, xylophone (*gambang*) and metallophones without resinators (*saron*); punctuating instruments which are gongs of deep tone and indicate divisions of the melody and verses, if song is employed; and rhythmical instruments, the drums. Not all of these instruments are used in a given type of orchestra.

In Java and Bali there are two musical scales, both pentatonic in practice, known as *slendro* and *pelog*. In *slendro* the octave is divided into almost equal intervals while in *pelog* the intervals are unequal. Since the majority of instruments have fixed pitch and because both the *slendro* and *pelog* scales are used in most orchestras, it is necessary to have the metallophones, xylophones and gong chimes in pairs tuned to each genus.

Rhythm is sometimes simple and regular, a 4/4 pattern, but usually it is complex and irregular with intricate designs. Harmony, if it exists at all as a conscious device of musical expression, is limited to simple chords in the orchestra. In common with the Orient in general, notation is rudimentary and used as an aid to memory.

The orchestra leader, a drummer, is generally the composer who elaborates new music and teaches it to his musicians. Each piece has a name and works are based on valid principles of form. In the fifteen to thirty minutes required for the usual orchestral

work, there are at least four divisions of structure consisting of themes and their development. Polyphonic devices are frequently used. The principal melody may be played on the metallophones and another theme performed on kettle gongs while other instruments provide arabesques and deep-toned gongs mark off the divisions of the piece. The drum, played by the conductor, gives the tempo for the orchestra.

Apart from the regular lyric plays found in China and Japan, Bali and Java are noted for the shadow-play, the favorite dramatic form. The *wayang kulit*, or shadow-play, is so called because puppets are manipulated between a lamp and a screen in such a way that shadows are cast on the screen in front of which the audience is seated. The director of the puppets, the *dalang*, tells the story—some episode from the *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata*, classical Hindu literature. The *dalang* is, of course, the star of the show, an artist of superior talent and intellectual standing. The shadow-play is folk drama, a medium of education, entertainment, moral uplift and amusement but it also reaches a higher level of art by its symbolism. It is accompanied by a type of orchestra, the *gender wayang*, consisting of four xylophones, that is directed by the *dalang* who indicates rhythms with a toe hammer. Music for the shadow-play is one of the distinctive forms developed by Balinese and Javanese composers.

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